

THE NEW ABOLITIONIST

“Abolish the White Race — By Any Means Necessary”

February 1999

Volume 2 Number 1

50¢

WE GOT THE CAMERA

by Steven L. Phalen, Phoenix

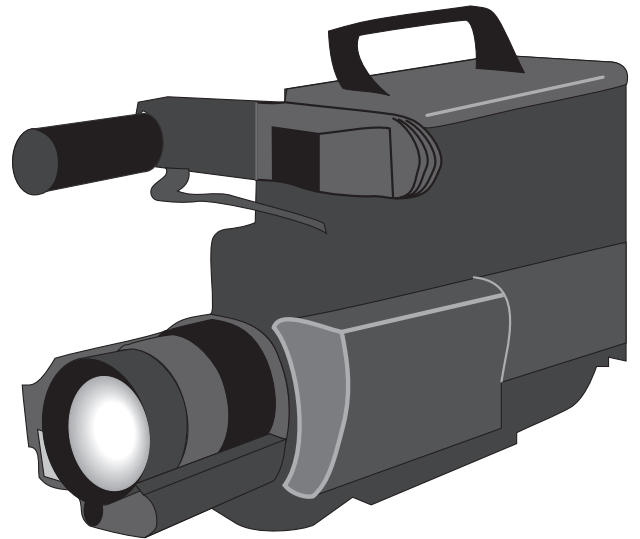
“Who got the camera?” —Ice Cube

Phoenix cops take heed! The next time you’re about to harass or beat someone, check yourself. . . *Copwatch is in the house and anything you say or do could be used against you in a court of law!!*

Copwatch, which includes members of the local group Ruckus, is a grassroots watchdog group that observes and records potentially abusive police incidents. Copwatch patrols go out regularly and videotape cops as they work their beat. Copwatch wants cops who are about to harass or beat someone to check themselves and realize that they could be on the news the next day, and that any video recording could become evidence against them in court.

Black Panther Party

The principles of Copwatch are based loosely on those of the Black Panther Party for Self Defense. The Black Panthers recognized the role cops play in oppressing people of color and ensuring white privilege. In fact, the Party got its start by watching cops when the late Huey P. Newton and other Black Panthers patrolled the streets of Oakland in the late 1960s. When pulled over by a cop (as usually happened simply because they were Black) Newton would confront cops and



RENEW THE LEGACY OF JOHN BROWN

If the task of the nineteenth century was to overthrow slavery, and the task of the twentieth century was to end legal segregation, the key to solving this country’s problems in the twenty-first century is to abolish the white race as a social category—in other words, eradicate white supremacy entirely.

John Brown represents the abolitionist cause. Nominally white, he made war against slavery, working closely with black people. Those who think it saner to collaborate with evil than to resist it have labeled him a madman, but it was not for his madness that he was hanged; no, it was for obeying the biblical injunction to remember them that are in bonds as bound with them. For those who suffer directly from white supremacy, John Brown is a high point in a centuries-long history of resistance; for so-called whites he is the hope that they can step outside of their color and take part in building a

new human community.

John Brown’s body lies a-mould’rin’ in the grave, but his soul calls out to the living. He is buried alongside family members and comrades-at-arms near North Elba, New York, in the beautiful Adirondack Mountains, which he often said had been placed there to serve the emancipation of the American slave. For many years African Americans and others celebrated May 9th, the anniversary of his birth, by gathering at his gravesite. We call upon those who share the vision of a country without racial walls to join hands there in 1999—his one hundred and ninety-ninth year—to honor his memory and the memory of the others, black and white, who fought alongside him, and to rededicate ourselves to the fulfillment of the tasks for which they laid down their lives.

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We Got Camera

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use the language of the law against them. By asserting his legal rights and the rights of Black people in general, Newton took away much of the power that cops held over the Black community.

The Thick White Line

People may ask, "But why watch cops?" After all, cops often see themselves as the "thin blue line" between individual freedom and social disorder. The Ruckus asserts that Copwatch is needed because in the U.S., the police have historically served the interests of capitalism and white privilege. Cops are more like a "thick white line" — a barrier between not only rich and poor, but also between the white race and everyone else.

Thus cops work to maintain the status quo in a socially unjust society, a society in which neither people of color nor those who partake of white privilege are free. Therefore, since the police have an *institutional* role in defending this status quo, police abuse is not just a matter of certain bad cops, as some would claim. Whether "good" or "bad," it is the job of a cop to defend the status quo of whiteness. And this is why we feel that a copwatch is really needed — *to mess with the system of white privilege!* By documenting police abuse and in turn forcing the police to face its injustices, a serious flaw in the color line will be exposed and, hopefully, stripped of its power. In this

way, a step toward rejection of white privilege can be taken. Then and only then can the injustices of capitalism truly be confronted.

The Program

Copwatch *demand*s an end to police brutality, by any means necessary. Copwatch is not affiliated with any law



enforcement agency, unlike many so-called civilian review boards that include

either cops or appointees lobbied for by police departments. Because of this history of cooptation, Copwatch is working with Citizens for Improved Community-Police Relations (CICPR), a group that's working toward the creation of citizen-run civilian review boards (no cops) and with full investigative and punitive powers in cases of police abuse of authority.

Copwatch is the civilian review board of the streets. We encourage citizens to join us in exercising everyone's right to observe the police.

Join Copwatch

If you are committed to stopping police abuse and want to participate in our patrols, give Copwatch a call at (602) 241-6353, or write to: PO Box 1543 / Phoenix, AZ 85001
...but if you're a cop, *save your dime, pig.*

John Brown Day

Continued from front page

John Brown Day '99 will be a day of ritual, reflection, remembrance, and renewal.

Signed by: Russell Banks, Derrick Bell, John Bracey, Robin D.G. Kelley, Martin Espada, Herbert Hill, Barbara Kingsolver, Toni Morrison, Theresa Perry, Ishmael Reed, David Roediger, Sapphire, Pete Seeger, Dorothy Sterling, Cornel West, Howard Zinn, and the editors of Race Traitor

Three commemorations are planned:

- **May 1, North Elba, New York.** Call (781) 255-5964 or (718) 670-7093
- **May 2, Altadena, California,** at the gravesite of Brown's son Owen. Call (310) 712-3936.
- **May 8, Osawatomie, Kansas.** Call (918) 599-7306

John Brown Day
PO Box 400603 Cambridge, MA 02140
johnbrownaday@hotmail.com

THE NEW ABOLITIONIST

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For areas not listed here, please call or write the Boston or D.C. addresses.

WHY ABOLITIONISTS ARE NOT ANTI-RACISTS

by Chris Niles, Editor

Abolitionism is not synonymous with anti-racism. Indeed, the theoretical and practical differences between abolitionism and anti-racism are, to say the least, critical.

Over the years, various abolitionists have taken care to elucidate and qualify those differences. Yet, many people, from academics to activists, continue to conflate the two traditions. This situation needs to be rectified. So I'm going to attempt, as briefly and as clearly as possible, to distinguish abolitionism from anti-racism.

In order to understand anti-racism, one obviously must have a clear understanding of what "racism" is. Here's how the Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines it: "a belief that some races are by nature superior to others; discrimination based on such a belief."

This definition is similar to any that you might find in any other dictionary in any other language. But there is one very serious problem here: against all scientific knowledge and common sense, this definition of racism clearly assumes that there are such things as biologically identifiable races. That is, the term racism implies that there is not one human race but a plurality of races—a "white race," a "black race," a "yellow race," a "red race," etc.

Immediately, we can see that anti-racists have a very serious problem: They do not perceive race as a fiction. Since they do not clearly perceive race as a fiction, they cannot clearly perceive the forces that made the creation of the fiction "necessary" in the first place. Since they do not clearly perceive the forces that made the creation of the fiction "necessary" in the first place, they cannot ascertain how that fiction is maintained. If they cannot ascertain how that fiction is maintained, then they cannot precisely determine the

central role that the fiction of race plays in reinforcing entrenched, authoritarian power. If they cannot precisely determine the central role that the fiction of race plays in reinforcing entrenched, authoritarian power, then their ability to develop effective strategies and tactics to challenge that power is seriously diminished. If their ability to develop effective strategies and tactics to challenge that power is seriously diminished, then so is any hope of changing this society, much less building a new world.

Abolitionists, on the other hand, do perceive race as a fiction. We believe that the so-called white race is a uniquely destructive social construct that emerged from the material and psychological "requirements" of the international slave trade and plantation slavery, and that the "white race" is the *raison d'être* for racial mythology. We believe that it is not "racists" (or "racism") but the behavior of "white people"—white as in "race," not skin color—that is the root of the world's greatest evils for the last 500 years.

Abolitionists believe that to not see the creation of the white race is to not see history clearly. To not see history clearly is to repeat it in one dreary form or another. We are not interested in fighting for "racial justice" because we believe that such a thing is, by definition, impossible and, hence, absurd. For similar reasons, you will not find abolitionists working to build a "multi-racial" movement or advocating "racial harmony." Abolitionists believe that the only way to for humanity to liberate itself from the deadly logic of race is to abolish the white race. Not to eliminate racism but to abolish the white race. Not to attack racists but to attack the white race. Not to deconstruct the white race but to destroy the white race. Not to create safe spaces for white people to contemplate their guilt or complicity with evil

but to expose the relative privileges, entitlements and power available to members of the white race.

We also believe that the abolition of the "white race" is central to any struggle against capitalism, patriarchy, ecological degradation, homophobia, etc. Any movement that claims to be doing the "Lord's work" but fails to highlight the need for the abolition of the white race may win some temporary victories, but in the long term it is doomed.

Some might protest that there are certainly people who identify as anti-racist who understand that race is a social construct. True enough. But to see race as a social construct while continuing to use the language of anti-racism is confusing, not to mention unnecessary. For example, the other day a friend of mine who is sympathetic to abolitionism called Jefferson a "fucking racist." I objected to her characterization of "our" third president and pointed out that "Jefferson was not a fucking racist but a fucking white man." Indeed, in many of his writings, Jefferson waxed eloquent about how wonderful it was to be a member of the superior white race. He was not a racist but a white romantic, and, of course, an unabashed white supremacist. By calling Jefferson a racist, my friend both naturalized Jefferson's white racial identity and called Jefferson out of his name, so to speak.

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Black Workers Sue Amtrak

Company Retaliates Against Supporter

BOSTON, January 1999—The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, based on Washington D.C., has filed a \$100 million class action suit against Amtrak, charging the company with harassing black workers and maintaining a segregated work force. The suit has been filed on behalf of 1,000 current Amtrak employees and 4,000 rejected employees, including hundreds in the Boston area.

One of the witnesses on the side of the black workers is Bill Regan, whom most people call a white man. For a long time he has fought against whitist hiring and promotion policies at Amtrak, where he works as an engineer. As a result he has been threatened, assaulted, even set on fire by fellow employees. Now, as he

prepares to testify on the side of black workers, the company is trying to fire him. The charge is that he omitted information on his employment application nine years ago. Lawyers for the suit have denounced the charges against Regan as company retaliation.

Regan has his own discrimination complaint against Amtrak pending with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, stemming from harass-

Amtrak engineer Bill Regan.

ment going back to 1994 when he began questioning the company's treatment of black workers. MCAD is swamped with complaints, many of which are backed up for years. — Sources: Bay State Banner & the Boston Globe

Abolitionists and Anti-Racists

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She asked for more examples of what I meant so I gave them: American slavery was maintained in the interests of white people, not racists; Andrew Jackson did not break 132 treaties with various Native American tribes to advance the interests of racists but those of white people; President McKinley did not conquer the Philippines for the greater glory of the racists but for the white race; agents of the British Empire saw themselves acting in the interests of the queen and the white race, not the racists; the signs in the segregated South did not read "Racists Only," they read, "Whites Only"; when a neighborhood is gentrified, white people move in, not racists; Trent Lott, Bill Clinton, Newt Gingrich, and Jerry Brown are not racists but self-identified white men, each who, in a more or less conscious way, are working for the interests of white people.

In short, the language of anti-racism has dulled our sense of history to the point that we forget that most white people, be they politicians or paupers, have to one degree or another seen themselves as unproblematically white and acted, more

or less overtly, more or less consciously, in the interest of the white race, not, it must be emphasized, in the interests of racists or racism.

At the *New Abolitionist*, we do not believe that the language of anti-racism is adequate to the politics of abolitionism, not to mention securing the deepest understanding possible of the political, social and economic history of race. So, we've developed some new language:

First, the term racism, besides the problems noted above, has spawned all kinds of wacky, misleading constructs, e.g. "white racism," (implying that Black people can be racist, too, thereby missing the whole point of race), "reverse-racism" (implying that Black people's nasty attitudes towards whites is equivalent to white people's nasty attitudes toward Blacks), or "in-house racism" (implying that people who are racially assigned as black can be racist to one another). Instead, the *New Abolitionist* will use the term "whiteism" (first coined by Malcolm X), which we believe speaks much more precisely to the destructive logic that is

"white" people. We will use the term "whiteness" to refer to any behavior that can be characterized as protecting or benefiting the white race.

Second, instead of characterizing white people or their politics and behavior as "racist" we will identify white people as simply "white"—a slanderous-enough term, we think—and the politics and behavior of white people as "whitist," pro-white, anti-Black, etc.

Third, since there is no evidence that we live in anything close to a real democracy (democracy being roughly equivalent to a society of freely associated human beings) but plenty of evidence that we live in a society that continues to benefit white people quite disproportionately, we shall frequently refer to this nation (and other nations where white rule is more or less central to the nations political and social economy) as a "whiteocracy" or, alternatively, a "white democracy."

Thank you for subscribing to or picking up the "new look" *New Abolitionist*. We hope that you find this publication challenging and inspiring.

INSTEAD OF A DEFENSE

The Impeachment & Trial of Bill Clinton

by John Garvey, New York

With a few exceptions, there are no “progressive” or “left” voices being raised in support of the impeachment and removal of Clinton from office. In part, this may be rooted in a desire to avoid providing any support to attacks on sexuality or privacy (reflected, for example, in the writings of Katha Pollitt in *The Nation*) but I think it owes at least as much, and probably more, to the extent of genuine support that Clinton retains among all sorts of folks who consider themselves to be “progressive” or “left” and institutions that are similarly described (such as Local 1199, the hospital workers union here in New York).

At the same time, it seems clear that the most powerful economic forces in the country have extended their political, financial and intellectual support to Clinton. In light of the Republican Party’s traditional ties to those powerful forces, the extent of the Republican fury and the all-but-unanimous support for impeachment among House members are somewhat curious.

Although it is hard to question their dedication to constitutional principles, I suggest that the Republican Representatives were voting to forestall what they understand to be a significant threat to their continued ascendancy from the far-right. To ward off future challenges in primaries, they had to be seen as determined anti-Clintonites. This would, in part, explain the willingness of Congressman Bob Barr of Georgia and Senator Trent Lott of Mississippi to appear at events sponsored by the Council of Conservative Citizens. As has been widely reported, the Council (www.cofcc.org) is a descendant of the white Citizens’ Councils—the Klan in suits.

Which raises the question of why

those far-right forces hate Clinton so much. I can’t imagine that all, or even most, of them are so terribly upset by his sexual adventures and lying. Instead, it seems to me that they hate him because he personifies a know-it-all government that is more than willing to sacrifice liberties and lives when it proves necessary to its purposes.

For them, as for me, Clinton is the kind of person who holds the opinions of ordinary folks in contempt—unless those opinions are picked up in one or another of his endless polls.

So now what? In the wake of the Robert Livingston resignation, David Duke has announced his candidacy for that seat in Louisiana. He’s already on the national fund-raising path. At an event in Arlington, Virginia on January 2nd, Duke was joined by Ed Fields, a long-time Ku Klux Klan leader from Georgia. According to the event organizer, many of those in attendance were members of the Council of Conservative Citizens. Duke proclaimed that he was running once again to defend the rights of Christian whites and went on to say; “If we can get just one person in Congress, it will be like opening the floodgates. It would change this country overnight.” He may just be right.

In that light, there are many who will insist that Clinton must be defended because his removal would represent a victory for the right and will lead to a strengthening of the forces symbolized by Duke.

That may or may not be so. But, a defense of Clinton is more or less the same as a defense of all the institutions that maintain the status quo. There are many who believe that the status quo must be defended because of the threat of something worse. But the status quo is the re-

ality that gives rise, over and over again, to the threat of something worse. We can be sure that we will either get the something worse now or we will be threatened by it again in the not too distant future. The status quo does not represent a step towards a new future and it will serve as a very fragile defense against the forces that wish to replace it with something worse. If we wish to defeat those forces, we will, among other things, have to provide their supporters with an alternative worth fighting for.

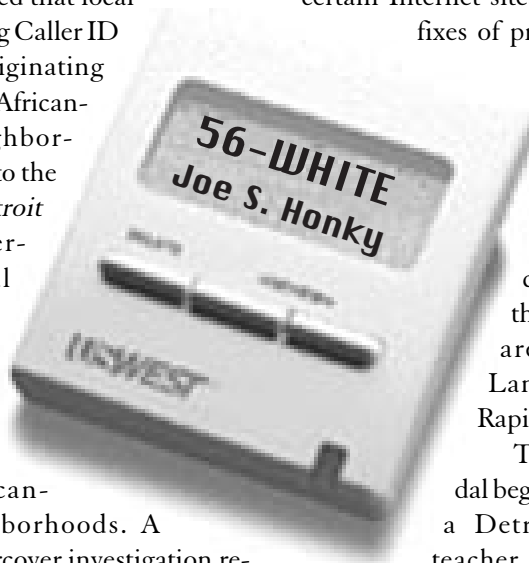
I feel no need to have a position on Clinton’s removal through impeachment but I do have a clear position on Clinton. He is an enemy of human freedom and therefore he, along with all the rest of them in Washington, must be removed. That is not a task for the next two months nor is it a task that will be accomplished by congressional action.

COLOR ID

DETROIT December 1998—

A Detroit newspaper investigation has revealed that local businesses are using Caller ID to screen calls originating from traditionally African-American neighborhoods. According to the report by the *Detroit Advertiser*, merchants in several major metropolitan Michigan areas are denying service to residents of traditionally African-American neighborhoods. A month-long undercover investigation revealed that store owners would routinely use the Caller ID function of their telephone service to screen out calls originating from “bad neighborhoods.”

In fact, a number of electronics vendors were found to be hawking so-called “Color ID” boxes that are specially pro-



grammed to detect a preset list of telephone prefixes. The list, also available on certain Internet sites, indexes the prefixes of predominantly African-American and

Latino neighborhoods throughout the state of Michigan.

Among the cities mentioned in the *Advertiser* report are Detroit, Flint, Lansing, and Grand Rapids.

The Color ID scandal began to unravel when a Detroit high school teacher moved across the street and began having problems ordering in food. When the schoolteacher moved from the west to the east side of Woodward Avenue in mid-October she was assigned a new prefix by the telephone company. From that point on she was unable to call in her weekly order

of a “Friday Night Special” from a local pizza joint. “The phone just rang and rang and it was absolutely the same number I’d dialed the week before,” Willie Kennedy told the *Advertiser*. “I walked across the street to my old house and got through right away.”

When her pizza order arrived, Kennedy joked about the ordeal with the delivery person. The person asked her, “Well, what’s your telephone number?” It was then that the restaurant employee explained that certain exchanges were being “filtered out” by the pizzeria to “insure the safety of its delivery people.” The delivery person also mentioned that this was “standard procedure” among many of the businesses that service Detroit’s fringe neighborhoods.

Kennedy now uses a cellular telephone to make outgoing calls, even at home. “The funny thing is,” Kennedy jokes, “I’m like the last person on this side of the street to switch to cellular.”

abolitionists online:
www.newabolition.org

RACE TRAITOR

*Journal of the
New Abolitionism*

4 issues: \$20 individuals,
\$40 institutions

Winter 1999

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Check out our website:
www.postfun.com/racetractor

Letters

I read your “Don’t vote” thang in the August 1998 *New Abolitionist* and I am in complete agreement. No one should ever vote. As the Wobblies used to say, “It only encourages the bastards...” I could make a fine case that in this New World Order politics doesn’t even exist anymore. No change is possible and for we abolitionists to put any faith in democratic politics or public policy is the height of folly. This is a bitter pill for liberal leftists to swallow, but our republican form of government is operating exactly as it intended to. It is keeping those with capital with capital and those without capital without capital.

Your suggestions for creative nonvoting are apt, and what is needed is a way to totally delegitimize the entire legislative system. Of course this is already happening. Fewer and fewer people vote, and

the average Joe realizes that it is a futile exercise. Abolitionists and other radicals need to jump in front of the train of public opinion. We need to tell people why their vote is meaningless and begin to develop critiques of the totality. The “Race Traitor” theory is vital in this regard, but it needs to be combined with real “direct activism” that exists outside of any systematic possibility of co-optation.

Yes, we need to be thinking, “Harriet Tubman, John Brown and Geronimo.” What did these personages have in common? A militant anti-authoritarianism and a use of fire arms. The bottom line is: societies are altered by the people in arms or the people are altered.

James Murray
PO Box 2945 Tulsa, OK 74101-2945

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Movies

NO FUTURE

A Review of *American History X*

by Beth Henson, Boston

American History X is the story of a young skinhead, Derek Vinyard; his younger brother, Danny, who is anxious to follow in his footsteps; a handful of ineffectual liberals trying to dissuade them; and Derek's trip to prison, where disgust with his white brethren and friendship with a black workmate lead him to renounce his skinhead ways. The acting is brilliant, the locations are gritty, the dialogue makes sense, but despite its realism, the movie fails to ask some basic questions: why are these kids drawn to the Nazis and what alternative makes sense?

Who are these skinheads? Like Derek and Danny, their fathers fought to keep blacks off the job. Now the kids have no jobs worth defending. Seth, Derek's buddy, works as an exterminator. Why isn't Derek slated to follow his dad into the fire department? What about

Danny, who's about to drop out of high school? The kids in the Club, smashing into the liquor store as if it were a symbol of everything that's wrong with their lives, how many of them could get a job if they wanted to, not a MacJob or temp work? They grow up between Toys 'R Us and McDonald's and go from toy guns to real ones without ever opening their eyes. Drinking in cars, hanging out at malls, never learning anything at school except to feel stupid.

What the film fails to address are the conditions that leave them numbed and violent, and the steps they could take to



break free.

Derek in prison does not take those steps either. His conversion is sentimental and reactive. His black workmate is the only admirable character in the movie. But while they become friends,

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Editor's note: The following letter was sent to the Race Traitor web site at www.postfun.com/racetraitor.

I am a seventeen year old, white, southern female. I live in Georgia, and the race ratio here is pretty much half & half.

I'm sick of hearing about all the racist bullshit going on in the world. Here i am, in the deep south, surrounded by some of the most radical of all rednecks. I totally agree with many aspects of your point of view. I do believe that there is still large amounts of racism found throughout the community, especially in our judicial system and government. I also see it in the police system, and I know where much of the animosity comes from.

The problem with this world is, is that ignorance seems to be a common plague. I see racism everywhere I go, and I'll tell

you where most of it all starts—in our school system. Nobody is born a bigot. It's what you learn, and your experiences that cause you to hate.

The only way peace will ever be achieved is if you can look through the eyes of your brother, and try to understand where this insensible hatred came from.

Unfortunately, the projects and ghettos where I come from are predominantly black. You know what one of my black friends told me? She told me that it will always be this way, because that is how the government makes sure white power is established. Honestly, I agree with her.

I remember hearing the typical white comment "they can be educated, they can get jobs. Welfare is no excuse." However, how can anyone stay in school when you have holes in your clothes and no food to eat? When you're basically told from the

day your born that your society's trash, and that your inferior? I know that these views are installed.

I think we're all set on past events that feeds the flames of hate. There will never be an excuse for slavery, but don't blame me. I can't help what the assholes did. Holocaust, slavery, these are historical things that were never right, and can no way be justified, but hanging on to hate because of these events makes the horror of them live on. We, as a people, need to look at our history and say "okay, we messed up...so lets find a way to repair the hatred that we fell, and never let this happen again." All I can really say, is that under our colors, we all bleed red. I'm not afraid to hold the hand of my brothers and sisters...are you?

E.S. / BigGirlcjp@aol.com

What We Believe

The white race is a historically constructed social formation. It consists of all those who partake of the privileges of the white skin in this society. Its most wretched members share a status higher, in certain respects, than that of the most exalted persons excluded from it, in return for which they give their support to a system that degrades them.

The key to solving the social problems of our age is to abolish the white race—in other words, to abolish white supremacy. Until that task is accomplished, even partial reform will prove elusive, because white influence permeates every issue, domestic and foreign, in U.S. society.

The way to abolish the white race is to challenge, disrupt and eventually overturn the institutions and behavior patterns that reproduce the privileges of whiteness, including the schools, job and housing markets, and the criminal justice system. The abolitionists do not limit themselves to socially acceptable means of protest, but reject in advance no means of attaining their goal.

Derek does not become a race traitor—he simply becomes that consummate Hollywood hero, an individualist. No getting people together, no organizing to stop the violence, no mention of anti-racist skinheads.

Released from prison, he rejects the adulation of his former skinhead comrades and attacks their leader and leaves him bleeding; the next day the FBI approaches him for information, with the unspoken threat of return to prison. The alternative to being a racist thug is to be a snitch.

But what alternatives are there? Not tolerance. One of the best scenes in the movie is the debate between an impassioned Derek and Elliott Gould as a burned out schoolteacher. The teacher offers nothing to

counter Derek's thundering rage. What's more, in the opening scene he has announced he is ready to expel Danny from school; his compassion has reached its limits. So much for liberalism in all its threadbare weariness.

What else could change their lives? Not crack and not computers. Nothing they as individuals can escape to. Only radical change can save these overgrown, pumped up children—only when they realize they must reject everything in their lives—break the radical chains—school, jobs, the strait-jacket of gender. Only by recognizing that their notion of racial superiority—being white—has nothing to give them but more of the same. Only by building a new world.

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Treason to whiteness is loyalty to humanity.